

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment A is in response to the Office Action of March 21, 2005. The outstanding Office Action rejects Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over *Kalb, Jr.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,742,177)(hereinafter *Kalb*). Additionally, Claims 7 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Kalb* in view of *Miller* (U.S. Patent No. 5,889,408)(hereinafter *Miller*)

These grounds of rejection are addressed in detail by the remarks below. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested based on the amendments made and the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 16 are amended herein. Claim 18 is cancelled in this amendment. New Claims 20-24 have been added to clarify aspects of the invention. Accordingly, Claims 1-17 and 19-24 are now pending in this application.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over *Kalb*. As currently constructed these claims now fall into two groups (including added claims). They will be discussed accordingly.

Claims 1-15:

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate limitations recited in Claims 5 and 6. As explained by the Examiner, both claims 5 and 6 are allowable. Accordingly, this Claim 1 should now be in condition for allowance.

Additionally, the dependent Claims 2-15 (which all now depend from allowable Claim 1) are believed allowable over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, in view of the amendments made and the discussions above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-15 are allowable over the cited art. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the pending §102 rejection of Claims 1-15.

Claims 16 and 17:

Claims 16 and 17 have also been rejected under §102 as being anticipated by *Kalb*. However, the amendments to Claim 16 include the limitations of Claim 18 which extend the

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claimed invention to a method for "measuring ... at least two quiescent currents" to obtain associated first and second voltages "wherein the first and second voltages are set within the range from 50 to 140 % of a nominal supply voltage for the device". The applicants note that such limitations have been expressed as allowable in the Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 16 is in condition for allowance. Moreover, the dependent Claim 17 depends from Claim 16 and is therefore also believed to be allowable over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed with respect to claim 16.

Accordingly, in view of the amendments made and the discussions above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, and 17 are allowable over the cited art. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the pending §102 rejections of Claims 1-4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, and 17.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 7 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kalb* in view of *Miller*. The following discussion covers these claims. As discussed above, it is believed that the base claims 1 and 16 (upon which Claims 7 and 19 depend) are no longer anticipated by *Kalb*. Additionally, *Miller* does nothing to remedy the shortcomings of *Kalb*. Neither of the cited references teach "first and second voltages [that] are set within the range from 50 to 140 % of a nominal supply voltage for the device" (Claim 16) or "wherein the predetermined relationship is determined by at least one of evaluating the functional relationship for at least one other die on the same wafer or is determined from a plurality of dies fabricated previously" (Claim 17). Absent such teachings the cited references, either alone or in any reasonable combination fail to teach all of the claim the limitations. Accordingly, the references are insufficient to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness as to the pending claims. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request that the cited grounds of rejection for Claims 16 and 17 be withdrawn.

New Claims

Claims 20-24 claim a method for testing semiconductor devices. Operations (of Claim 20) include measuring first device for a first current at a first voltage and a second current at a second voltage; identifying a functional relationship between the first and second currents; and

comparing the functional relationship to a predetermined reference to determine whether the device is defective. It is not believed the cited art is directed to comparing to predetermined reference. In particular, the applicants do not believe the cited art a predetermined reference that comprises "an expected functional relationship between said first and second currents as determined by at least one of: a measurement of a prototype chip or characterization of a history of similar chips already fabricated" (Claim 21) or a predetermined reference that "is related to an ohmic linear relationship defined by the ratio of a first current at high V_{dd} and a second current at low V_{dd} " (Claim 22) or wherein the "functional relationship comprises a exponential relationship between the first and second currents" (Claim 23). These new claims do not present new matter being well addressed in the Specification (e.g., at pages 13-17).

Additionally, Claim 24 recasts Claim 15 in independent form. Accordingly it is believed that this claim should be allowable.

Informalities

Claim 1 was objected to as having an antecedent basis problem. This has been corrected. Moreover, Claim 18 has cancelled so as to not be duplicative of amended claim 16.

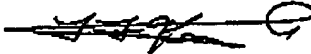
Conclusion:

As has been discussed herein, it is submitted that the cited references, alone or in any combination, do not teach or suggest the features of the claimed invention. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that remaining pending Claims 1-17 and 19-24 are patentably distinct from the cited art. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of these claims. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are allowable and that this case is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner wish to contact the prosecuting attorney for any reason, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact the undersigned at Examiner's convenience at the telephone number set out below.

If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct such fees from Deposit Account No. 12-2252 (Order No. 03-0724).

Respectfully submitted,

BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP



Francis T. Kalinski II,
Registration No. 44,177

P.O. Box 70250
Oakland, CA 94612-0250
Telephone: (650) 961-8300